

Our auto companies and our corporations stagger under cost increases. Our small businesses choose between covering their employees or taking a step towards insolvency. And of course, health care costs are the leading cause of bankruptcy for American families.

We cannot fix this economy without reforming our health care system. We cannot be fiscally responsible without addressing the stunning economic liabilities that we have associated with Medicare and other promises we have made.

The reforms that we are offering will offer a real choice of plans to small businesses in America. It will provide tax credits to small businesses, and it will end the practice of insurance companies denying coverage to Americans who need it. Most importantly, it will emphasize prevention, wellness, and patient-centered care.

The bottom line, reforming health care to contain rising costs is the most effective action we can take to return our Nation's budget to balance and make our workers the most competitive in the world.

PATIENT-CENTERED SOLUTIONS

(Mr. PRICE of Georgia asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. PRICE of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, today I draw attention to a vision for a new era of American health care, a clear path to provide access to affordable, quality care for all Americans.

There's no doubt that our health care system is failing some of America's patients. Now, some in this body believe that the solution is giving greater control over health care decisions to Washington, a government takeover of personal health insurance.

Now, as a physician, I know that government interference only harms patient access to health care. Real positive reform will only be achieved by empowering patients, not government and not bureaucrats. Positive reform starts with giving ownership of health coverage back to the patient, not the government. Allowing individuals full control over their coverage will make insurers truly accountable to patients, leading to greater choice, innovation, and responsiveness.

Secondly, we must provide the proper financial incentives so that there's no reason to be uninsured. With tax reform, not government mandates, we can achieve universal access to care for all Americans.

Mr. Speaker, Republicans have a positive, patient-centered prescription for America that doesn't result in a government takeover.

□ 1230

HONORING THE LIFE OF AMBASSADOR JACK HENNING

(Ms. SPEIER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1

minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. SPEIER. Mr. Speaker, we lost a lion of the labor movement and a true son of San Francisco with the passing of Ambassador Jack Henning. Jack spent the vast majority of his 93 years fighting for men and women in the fields, factories, and loading docks of America. The only thing he loved more than telling labor stories to anyone who would hear them was telling them to those who didn't.

For 26 years, Jack was the driving force behind the California Labor Federation, but he served our country in many ways. He was the director of the California Department of Industrial Relations under Governor Pat Brown, Under Secretary of Labor for President Kennedy, and U.S. Ambassador to New Zealand for President Lyndon Johnson.

Mr. Speaker, my thoughts are with Jack's family and the millions of Americans—most of whom never knew him—who earn a liveable wage, work under safer conditions, and are able to take their child to a doctor because of the tireless passion of Ambassador Jack Henning.

A REAL WAY TO PEACE

(Mr. STEARNS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. STEARNS. Mr. Speaker, as President Obama begins to wade into the Israel-Palestinian conflict, he must remember who our friends are. Israel is America's most reliable and only democratic ally in the Middle East. Yet in his speech last week in Cairo and in statements by his administration, President Obama seems only to want to pressure Israel, while not requiring similar concessions from the Palestinians and other Arab states.

Starting with the British Partition Plan in 1937—when they were offered the western part of Palestine—then again to the U.N. Partition Plan in 1947, to the Camp David talks in 2000, and most recently in December of 2008, the Palestinians have rejected every plan to divide the land into independent states. Each time their answer was “no.”

No outside party, President Obama included, can arbitrarily impose a peace agreement, nor can peace be achieved by setting conditions on just one party, Israel, which has been willing to take the necessary and difficult steps towards peace and consider compromise.

THE RECOVERY BILL

(Mr. ARCURI asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. ARCURI. Mr. Speaker, it is undeniable that we have seen many positive signs in our economy since January. The unemployment rate, while still far

too high, is improving and money is starting to flow through the economy and into our cities and municipalities to improve our infrastructure and ensure the safety of every American.

The recovery bill has been at the core of this progress and has saved and created jobs and made much-needed investments in my local district. For example, in my hometown of Utica, New York, the recovery bill provided the City of Utica with over \$2 million for lead abatement in homes across the city. This lead abatement program will put people to work and improve the health and quality of life for countless families. Without this recovery bill funding, the City of Utica would have had to have continued to delay this vital program because it is likely that they did not have the funding necessary to proceed with these plans on its own.

I will continue to fight for the recovery bill funding for critical projects in my district, and I know that we will see even more progress in all of our communities as we all continue to work together to lead America out of this economic crisis.

ENERGY

(Mr. ELLISON asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. ELLISON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to talk about the importance of building a clean energy economy for America. Americans are fed up with the same tax breaks for oil companies that post record profits while working families are stuck paying exorbitant prices at the pump. Americans want a new energy economy, a green economy, to take us into the future, to take us into a carbon-neutral economy, to take us into jobs, to take us into a future in which we are not dependent upon the automobile for every transportation decision.

The time has come to transform our economy for decades to come. The time has come to create American jobs with new, clean, American-made energy. The clean energy jobs plan is the next step in creating millions of American jobs in clean energy, efficiency, and modernizing a smart electric grid. We can reduce our dependence on costly oil, curb pollution, and create jobs. We can do this. Yes, we can.

FIX THE HEALTH CARE SYSTEM

(Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise to call out the siren and the clarion call for fixing America's health care system. We urgently need to fix it, and we realize that if you've got it, you like it, you can keep it.

We need to get a system that will allow those that are underinsured and without insurance to be able to be